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**Beauregard, T. A. (2012). Perfectionism, self-efficacy and OCB: The moderating role of gender. *Personnel Review*, 41(5), 590-608.**

#### Structured abstract

##### Purpose

To 1) examine personality as an alternative explanation to social exchange in predicting OCB, and 2) investigate the moderating role of gender in the link between personality and OCB.

##### Design/Methodology/Approach

A survey was conducted among 223 UK public sector employees. Multiple regression analysis tested main effects of personality and main and moderating effects of gender on OCB.

##### Findings

Findings indicate that personality has significant explanatory power beyond that of social exchange in predicting OCB. Employees with high levels of adaptive perfectionism report higher levels of OCB. General self-efficacy also predicted more participation in citizenship behaviours, but only for men. Women appear to carry out citizenship behaviours regardless of how confident they feel in being able to successfully perform. This may be attributable to social and organizational norms that place women in the role of 'helper' and expect more communal behaviours from them than from men.

##### Limitations/Implications

The cross-sectional design of the study does not permit firm conclusions regarding causality, and the use of self-report data carries with it the potential for common method bias.

### Practical implications

The study's results suggest that encouraging adaptive perfectionistic behaviours and cognitions among employees (e.g., setting high personal standards for performance while taking setbacks in stride) may yield dividends in terms of OCB. Investing in general self-efficacy training, especially for male employees, may also improve participation in citizenship behaviours.

### Originality/Value

This study extends previous work on personality by demonstrating that adaptive perfectionism can predict OCB. Existing research on gender and OCB was extended by the discovery that the role of self-efficacy in predicting OCB may be particularly significant for men. Findings suggest that the use of social exchange theory as the predominant explanation for employees' performance of OCB may need to be reconsidered.

*Article type:* Research paper

*Keywords:* personality, gender, OCB, perfectionism, self-efficacy

### **Perfectionism, self-efficacy and OCB: The moderating role of gender**

In times of economic downturn, maximizing every employee's performance is more important than ever to managers and organizations. Beyond task performance, which concerns the fulfillment of the general responsibilities associated with a particular job or role, lies organizational citizenship behaviour, which contributes to "the maintenance and enhancement of the social and psychological context that supports task performance" (Organ, 1997, p. 91). This conceptualization of OCB has been equated to contextual work performance (Motowidlo, 2000), and encompasses such behaviours as volunteering to help new employees settle into the job (interpersonal helping), actively promoting the organization's products or services to others (loyal boosterism), and attending voluntary functions at work (civic virtue) (Moorman & Blakeley, 1995; Morrison, 1994).

Employees engaging in behaviours that sustain and improve the socio-psychological context of the workplace have been shown to yield significant advantages to organizations. Interpersonal helping has been found to explain significant variance in production quantity, production quality, revenue, operating efficiency, customer satisfaction, and performance quality (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1997; Walz and Niehoff, 2000). Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1994) also found civic virtue behaviours to be a significant predictor of sales performance. These findings illustrate the importance to organizations of establishing which factors prompt employees to engage in citizenship behaviours, and which factors dissuade them from doing so.

The prevailing theoretical framework used to explain employee participation in OCB is based on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964): when treated favourably by others, individuals will feel obliged to respond in kind, through positive attitudes or behaviours toward the source of the treatment. The majority of recent research on

organizational citizenship behaviour has examined, as indicators of favourable treatment, employee perceptions of organizational justice and perceived organizational support – a “general perception concerning the extent to which the organization values [employees’] general contributions and cares for their well-being” (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1990, p. 51). Empirical results support a strong link between both perceived justice and perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behaviour (Liu, 2009; Wat and Shaffer, 2005).

The goals of this research are two-fold. First, the current study seeks to examine personality as an alternative explanation to social exchange in predicting OCB. In Motowidlo, Borman, and Schmit’s (1997) theory of individual differences in performance, it is proposed that organizational citizenship behaviour is predicted by contextual habits, skill, and knowledge, each of which is in turn predicted by personality variables. These personality variables influence the knowledge of what is required in a variety of contextual work situations, the skill in carrying out actions known to be effective in contextual work situations, and the patterns of responses that either facilitate or hinder effective performance in contextual work situations (Motowidlo *et al.*, 1997). There is a growing amount of research providing evidence for the influence of dispositional factors on the performance of various types of organizational citizenship behaviour. For example, conscientiousness has been positively associated with compliance (Organ and Lingl, 1995), civic virtue has been predicted by conscientiousness, agreeableness, and positive affectivity (Midili and Penner, 1995; Neuman and Kickul, 1998; Rioux and Penner, 2001), and agreeableness has been linked to a composite measure of OCB (Comeau and Griffith, 2005). As yet, however, little is known about the ability of personality variables to predict performance of OCB beyond that predicted by social exchange variables such as justice or POS. The current study takes a step toward filling this gap in the literature.

The second goal of the study is to investigate the role of gender in the link between personality and OCB. Gender has been posited as a key influence on the performance of OCB (Diefendorff *et al.*, 2002), due to social norms emphasizing the performance of communal, helping behaviours by women, in contrast to independent, assertive behaviours by men (Eagly and Steffen, 1984; Langford and MacKinnon, 2000). Research has shown that women in the workplace are expected by others to perform more OCB, and are more likely to view OCB as an element of their in-role, task performance (Heilman and Chen, 2005; Morrison, 1994). The present study will examine whether women are indeed more likely to perform OCB, and whether these heightened expectations for OCB mean that the hypothesized personality-OCB relationship will be attenuated for women.

### **PERSONALITY AND OCB**

The majority of research investigating the influence of dispositional variables on organizational citizenship behaviour has focused on factors from the Big Five personality taxonomy (also known as the Five-Factor Model). Research by Hough (1992) demonstrates, however, that the use of general measures of personality, such as the Big Five traits, may obscure potentially meaningful relationships between dispositional variables and behaviour at work. As the way in which people perceive their own competence and their ability to set and achieve goals has the potential to influence their performance at work, the present study will examine the impact of three more specific personality traits – adaptive perfectionism, maladaptive perfectionism, and generalized self-efficacy - in an effort to uncover significant associations they may have with organizational citizenship behaviour.

### *Perfectionism*

Perfectionism can be defined as the disposition to impose a standard that demands flawlessly executed performances and superior achievements (Flett and Hewitt, 2002). Research suggests that perfectionism can best be construed as two chiefly independent dimensions that differentiate between positive and negative aspects of the construct (Slaney *et al.*, 2001; Stumpf and Parker, 2000). These are commonly referred to as adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism (e.g., Chang *et al.*, 2004; Dunn *et al.*, 2006). Both adaptive and maladaptive perfectionists set high personal standards for their work or behaviour, but they respond differently when faced with a failure to achieve those standards. Adaptive perfectionists experience low levels of distress resulting from the discrepancy between their personal standards and their performance, while maladaptive perfectionists experience high levels of distress.

While there is little research linking perfectionism to workplace behaviour in a population of employed adults, there is evidence that adaptive perfectionism is related to beneficial work habits. Frost, Marten, Lahart and Rosenblate (1990) found a negative correlation between adaptive perfectionism and the frequency of procrastination in a sample of university students. Maladaptive perfectionists, in contrast, were prone to more severe procrastination, a greater fear of failure, and greater task aversiveness than those low in maladaptive perfectionism. In a study of female university students, Brown *et al.* (1999) found that adaptive perfectionism was associated with more frequent study behaviour and with higher academic achievement. Maladaptive perfectionism was also associated with more frequent study behaviour, but was related to perceptions of greater course difficulty and higher anxiety as well. Similarly, Braver (1996) found that adaptive perfectionism was positively associated with academic achievement among university students, while maladaptive perfectionism was positively associated with self-criticism and distress.

These positive work habits associated with adaptive perfectionism may be attributable to motivational aspects of perfectionism. Perfectionism is assumed to include not only the tendency to set high personal standards, but also the motivational component of the need to meet those standards and to strive to fulfill those standards (Hewitt and Flett, 1991). This proposition is supported by Frost *et al.* (1990), who found individuals with high personal standards to score significantly higher on measures of achievement striving. This achievement striving may, in turn, contribute to persistence on tasks (Bandura, 1989).

The achievement striving and persistence inherent to adaptive perfectionism may well contribute to the development of effective organizational citizenship behaviours, such as helping others, promoting the organization's services and objectives, keeping abreast of organizational developments and attending non-compulsory meetings, and complying with organizational rules and procedures even when it is inconvenient to do so. An individual with high personal standards for performance and effective work habits is more likely to engage in behaviours that require going above and beyond the task-related requirements of the job role, in order to maintain and enhance the social and psychological context of work. It is therefore to be expected that adaptive perfectionism will exert a positive effect on the performance of organizational citizenship behaviours.

Organizational citizenship behaviours may also be affected by maladaptive perfectionism. The tendencies toward self-criticism and procrastination associated with maladaptive perfectionism are likely to negatively influence patterns of organizational citizenship behaviour. For example, employees prone to procrastination are unlikely to keep up-to-date with organization-relevant professional information, or to be able to devote extra time to helping co-workers. Those who are customarily critical of their own performance and who doubt their own actions may be less likely to report putting themselves forward to actively promote the organization's services to others, or going



“beyond the call of duty” in obeying organizational rules and regulations.

*Hypothesis 1: Adaptive perfectionism will be positively related to OCB.*

*Hypothesis 2: Maladaptive perfectionism will be negatively related to OCB.*

### *Self-efficacy*

High self-efficacy is thought to contribute to improved performance in a range of situations due to its association with effective behavioural strategies. Self-efficacy theory posits that individuals judge their ability to cope successfully with challenges when faced with environmental demands, and that based on this judgment, individuals initiate and persist with behavioural strategies to manage challenges effectively and attain desired outcomes (Bandura, 1997). These behavioural strategies consist of self-regulatory techniques such as goal setting, development of rules for influencing the environment, and monitoring the self (Maddux, 1995). Support for these propositions has been found in Raghuram *et al.*'s (2003) study of telecommuters, wherein self-efficacy related to the telecommuting context predicted both adjustment to telecommuting and employees' efforts to proactively plan and organize their workday, with those higher in self-efficacy reporting better adjustment and greater use of structuring behaviours.

The contextual skills and knowledge which Motowidlo *et al.* (1997) conceive as predictors of organizational citizenship behaviour are likely to be influenced by an individual's degree of self-efficacy. As individuals high in self-efficacy make greater use of adaptive behavioural strategies (Maddux and Lewis, 1995; Raghuram *et al.*, 2003), these individuals are apt to have knowledge of both what citizenship behaviours are appropriate in a particular workplace situation and how to plan for and conduct these behaviours effectively. For instance, an individual high in self-efficacy may be more likely to volunteer to help co-workers with work-related problems, or to attend voluntary

meetings, because s/he is better able to proactively plan for these activities and organize the workday to accommodate them. Empirical support for this proposition is provided by Speier and Frese (1997) and Morrison and Phelps (1999), who found that generalized self-efficacy predicted personal initiative and ‘taking charge’ behaviour. It is therefore hypothesized that employees high in general self-efficacy will report greater performance of organizational citizenship behaviour.

*Hypothesis 3: General self-efficacy will be positively related to OCB.*

### **GENDER AND OCB**

The performance of OCB may also be influenced by an employee’s gender. Eagly’s (1987) social role theory explains how societally-determined beliefs about gender-appropriate characteristics translate themselves into differences in behaviour between women and men. When forming our beliefs about men and women, we observe their role performances. These role performances reflect the sexual division of labour and gender hierarchy of the society in which we live, because individuals adapt to the roles that are made available to them by acquiring role-related skills (Eagly *et al.*, 2000). Faced with the traditional homemaker/breadwinner division of labour, women have accommodated themselves to the domestic caregiver role by developing nurturing, interpersonally helpful (communal) behaviours. Men, in contrast, have accommodated themselves to the role of economic provider by developing more assertive and independent (agentic) behaviours (Eagly and Steffen, 1984). By succumbing to correspondence bias (Gilbert, 1998), whereby corresponding dispositions are inferred from behaviour, we observe women performing communal behaviours and men performing agentic behaviours and infer that women are relatively more warm and nurturing, and that men are relatively more assertive and independent (Eagly and Koenig, 2006). These observations and inferences contribute to the formation of gender roles, which are “collections of beliefs about what women and men actually do and ought to do” (Eagly *et al.*, 2000: 130). The

specific construct of gender role originates in the more general concept of social role, which refers to shared expectations of people based on their membership of a particular social category. Gender roles thus represent shared expectations of appropriate behaviours for women and men (Eagly, 1987).

These societal expectations can wield a powerful influence on behaviour. As with other social roles, gender roles include descriptive norms, which are expectations about what men and women do, and injunctive norms, which are expectations about what men and women *should* do (Cialdini and Trost, 1998). Injunctive norms describe desirable and appropriate behaviours for women and men, and therefore offer guidance as to which behaviours are likely to elicit approval from others, and which are likely to provoke condemnation (Eagly *et al.*, 2000). Individuals are expected to behave in a manner consistent with their gender, and are often subject to negative outcomes if they fail to do so (Eagly *et al.*, 1995). Conformity to gender role prescriptions thus produces differences between men's and women's behaviour, as has been observed in research on the behavioural confirmation of implicitly activated stereotypes (e.g., Kray *et al.*, 2001; Snyder and Klein, 2005).

Gender-based expectations for behaviour often manifest themselves in the workplace (Eagly *et al.*, 1995). Consistent with the notion of women being associated with communal behaviours or traits, and men being associated with agentic characteristics, research shows that women tend to be stereotyped as warm, sociable, and relationship-oriented, while men tend to be stereotyped as competent, independent, and achievement-oriented (Langford and MacKinnon, 2000). Eagly and Crowley (1986: 284) posit that "women are expected to care for the personal and emotional needs of others, to deliver routine forms of personal service, and, more generally, to facilitate the progress of others toward their goals." Given that OCB encompasses communal behaviours aimed at enhancing

the social context of work, such as helping colleagues, volunteering to serve on committees, and conveying a positive attitude about the organization during interpersonal interactions with both organizational members and outsiders, gender role prescriptions may translate themselves into expectations for women to engage in a greater amount of OCB.

There is a growing body of evidence to support this notion. In laboratory studies by Allen and Rush (2001) and Farrell and Finkelstein (2007), participants consistently indicated that female employees would be more likely to engage in a range of citizenship behaviours than male employees. Research also shows that, as Kidder and Parks (2001) suggest, gender role expectations may help to expand the number of job behaviours defined as task performance rather than OCB. Heilman and Chen (2005) found that women were expected to perform organizational citizenship behaviour as a regular part of their job and penalized if they did not, whereas men were not expected to perform organizational citizenship behaviour and were rewarded if they did. Similarly, Lovell *et al.* (1999) demonstrated that although OCB ratings were linked to higher scores on performance appraisals, and that women were given higher OCB ratings than men, there were no differences found between women and men on performance appraisals. Developing this theme, Allen (2006) found that the link between organizational citizenship behaviour and promotion decisions was stronger for men than for women; as men were subject to fewer expectations than women to perform citizenship behaviours, they were rewarded to a greater degree (in the form of promotions) when they did.

Given that injunctive norms encourage people to behave in ways consistent with their prescribed gender roles (Eagly *et al.*, 1995), prompting individuals to internalize cultural expectations about their gender (Kidder, 2002), it is reasonable to suppose that expectations of women to perform more OCB may manifest themselves in higher levels of OCB among female

employees. If women internalize these societal expectations for greater community spirit and helping behaviours, they may feel themselves obliged to engage in higher levels of organizational citizenship behaviour than men. Women have indeed been found more likely than men to consider organizational citizenship behaviour as part of their in-role job performance (Morrison, 1994).

Hypothesis 4: Women will report higher levels of OCB than will men.

Gender may also influence the link between dispositional characteristics and OCB. While perfectionism and self-efficacy may predict performance of organizational citizenship behaviour, both external and internalized expectations for women to perform a greater amount of OCB may mute that relationship. Feeling an obligation to engage in the communal behaviours expected of one's gender may mean that women are more likely to perform OCB regardless of their personality traits. For men, who are not subject to gender role expectations for communal behaviours, perfectionism and self-efficacy may predict their OCB more strongly.

*Hypothesis 5: Gender will moderate the relationship between personality and OCB, such that the relationship will be stronger for men than for women.*

## **METHOD**

### *Sample*

Participants were drawn from two organizations in the United Kingdom: a local government council and a further-education college. The council served a population of 122,802 inhabitants, and its range of services included tourism, health promotion, housing, economic development, and waste collection. Approximately 450 people worked for the council in a range of occupations, including highway inspector, environmental health officer, graphic designer, and chauffeur. The college offered a variety of degree and diploma options to a student population of 11,800 students, 10,000 of which were studying on a part-time basis. While the majority of the

600 college employees were engaged in teaching or curriculum support positions, other occupations included administration, personnel management, catering services, maintenance, and childcare.

Surveys were distributed to all 300 regular (i.e., not seasonal or temporary contract) employees of the council, and to all 486 regular employees of the college. Two hundred and thirty-one surveys were returned, yielding a response rate of 29%. Eight surveys were excluded from the final analyses due to missing responses, generating an effective sample size of 223. The majority of respondents were women (62.3%), with an average age of just over 41 years and average tenure of just under 8 years. Most respondents (79.8%) reported living with a spouse or partner, and 141 (63.2%) respondents had children, with the average age of the youngest child just over 14 years.

### *Measures*

For all measures, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each item on a seven-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” = 1 to “strongly agree” = 7.

*Organizational citizenship behaviour.* LePine, Erez, and Johnson’s (2002) meta-analysis of organizational citizenship behaviour dimensions suggested that most of the dimensions identified in the literature (e.g., interpersonal helping, civic virtue, compliance) are strongly related to one another, and are therefore indicators of the same underlying construct. No evident differences were found in the relationships between these dimensions and the most frequently researched antecedents to organizational citizenship behaviour: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational justice, leader support, and conscientiousness. The authors suggested that future research may therefore want to consider using an aggregate measure of organizational citizenship behaviour,

rather than continuing to measure and analyze each dimension as a separate construct. Hence, the present study aggregated Moorman and Blakely's (1995) interpersonal helping and loyal boosterism scales, Morrison's (1994) civic virtue scale, and Van Dyne, Graham, and Dienesch's (1994) compliance/obedience scale to form one composite organizational citizenship behaviour measure. Sample items include, "I volunteer to help new employees settle into the job" (interpersonal helping), "Regardless of the circumstances, I produce the highest quality possible work" (compliance/obedience), and "I attend voluntary meetings at work" (civic virtue). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .81.

*Gender* was dummy-coded, with male = 0 and female = 1.

*Adaptive perfectionism* was measured with the adaptive perfectionism subscale of Slaney, Mobley, Trippi, Ashby, and Johnson's (1996) revised Almost Perfect Scale. Seven items assessed the extent to which respondents perceived a low level of distress resulting from the discrepancy between their personal standards and their performance (e.g., "I expect the best from myself"). The reliability alpha for this scale was .89.

*Maladaptive perfectionism* was measured with the maladaptive perfectionism subscale of Slaney et al.'s (1996) revised Almost Perfect Scale. Seven items assessed the extent to which respondents perceived a high level of distress resulting from the discrepancy between their personal standards and their performance (e.g., "I hardly ever feel that what I've done is good enough"). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .93.

*General self-efficacy* was measured with Chen, Gully and Eden's (2001) New General Self-Efficacy scale. Eight items assessed the extent to which respondents perceived that they were able to successfully perform tasks in a variety of achievement situations (e.g., "In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me"). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .90.

### *Analysis*

The hypotheses concerning the proposed relationships between personality and organizational citizenship behaviour were tested using regression analysis. Specifically, organizational citizenship behaviour was individually regressed on the measures of gender, adaptive perfectionism, maladaptive perfectionism, and self-efficacy.

Several background variables were included in the analyses for control purposes: organization (Council/College, dummy-coded), and organizational tenure (in years). Tenure has previously been linked to organizational citizenship behaviour (Morrison, 1994), and organization was included to control for any potential differences in organizational citizenship behaviour performance resulting from variation in industry (i.e., education vs. government) or in organizational norms. Perceived organizational support and organizational justice were also included due to their established role in predicting organizational citizenship behaviour (e.g., Wayne *et al.*, 1997). Perceived organizational support was measured using Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, and Lynch's (1997) scale, and procedural, distributive, and interactional justice were measured with Colquitt's (2001) scale.

For each equation in the regression analyses, the control variables and gender were entered in step 1, followed by the personality variables in step 2. At this point, the change in  $R^2$  was used to evaluate the ability of the personality variables to explain variance beyond that accounted for by the social exchange variables (POS and justice). The interaction terms were entered in step 3, permitting the significance of the interactions to be determined after controlling for the main effects of the independent variables. The predictor variables were centred before forming interaction terms, in order to reduce the multicollinearity often associated with regression equations containing interaction terms (Aiken and West, 1991). Changes in  $R^2$  were used to evaluate the ability of the



interaction terms to explain variance beyond that accounted for by the main effects in the equation.

Because the data were collected through the use of a single survey at a single point in time, common method bias is a potential concern. Therefore, Harman's single-factor test was conducted (see Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). The procedure calls for an unrotated factor analysis to be conducted using all the items used in the independent variable measures (i.e., adaptive perfectionism, maladaptive perfectionism, self-efficacy, perceived organizational support, procedural, distributive, and interactional justice). When determining the number of factors necessary to account for the variance, common method bias is considered to be less of a concern if no general factor emerges. The factor analysis conducted for this study showed seven distinct factors (one for each variable) with eigenvalues greater than one, which collectively accounted for 71.39% of the variance. The first factor in the unrotated structure had an eigenvalue of 10.03 and only accounted for 20.47% of the variance; the other six factors accounted for the additional 50.92%. Because seven factors were identified, and the first factor did not account for the majority of the variance, it was concluded that common method bias is less likely to be unduly influencing the results of the study analysis.

## **RESULTS**

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Insert Table 1 about here

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The means, standard deviations, and correlations for each of the study variables are shown in Table 1. The results of the hierarchical regression analyses are presented in Table 2, with the simple slope regression analyses for the significant interaction presented in Table 3. This relationship is illustrated in Figure 1.

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Insert Table 2 about here  
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Hypothesis 1 was supported. Adaptive perfectionism had a significant, positive relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour ( $\beta = .32, p < .001$ ). Hypothesis 2 received no support; the negative relationship between maladaptive perfectionism and OCB was not significant. Hypothesis 3 was supported; self-efficacy had a significant, positive relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour ( $\beta = .21, p < .01$ ). Taken together, the personality variables explained an additional 18% of variance in OCB beyond that explained by the social exchange variables.

Support was also found for Hypothesis 4, with a positive, significant relationship between gender and OCB ( $\beta = .15, p < .05$ ), indicating that women were significantly more likely to perform OCB. Only partial support was found for Hypothesis 5. Gender moderated the positive relationship between self-efficacy and organizational citizenship behaviour, such that the relationship was stronger for men ( $\beta = .17, p < .01$ ) than for women ( $\beta = -.07, n.s.$ ). The interactions between adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism and OCB did not reach significance.

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Insert Table 3 about here  
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Insert Figure 1 about here  
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## DISCUSSION

Overall, the results of the analyses showed mixed support for the study's hypotheses. Adaptive perfectionism, self-efficacy and gender were found to have direct, significant effects on organizational citizenship behaviour. In addition, the effects of self-efficacy on organizational citizenship behaviour were found to be significant only for men, suggesting that women are more inclined to perform citizenship behaviours regardless of how they evaluate their own competence. However, maladaptive perfectionism did not emerge as a significant predictor of the dependent variable, and gender did not moderate the link between perfectionism and OCB.

In terms of theoretical implications, the findings indicate that personality has significant explanatory power beyond that of social exchange in predicting OCB. Self-efficacy, adaptive perfectionism and maladaptive perfectionism explained additional variance in OCB beyond that explained by the social exchange variables (organizational justice and POS). Furthermore, the significant main effects of POS and procedural justice disappeared after the personality variables were added to the model. This suggests that the use of social exchange as the predominant explanation for employees' performance of OCB may need to be reconsidered, and greater attention paid in future to the role of individual differences.

With regard to perfectionism, these findings extend the work of Accordino *et al.* (2000) and Brown *et al.* (1999), by demonstrating that perfectionism can predict not only academic achievement by university students, but also OCB by employed adults. In the present study, individuals high in adaptive perfectionism rated their performance of citizenship behaviours more highly than did individuals low in this construct. This enhanced OCB rating may be due to the constructive work habits displayed by adaptive perfectionists in a number of studies. Adaptive perfectionists tend to prepare more, procrastinate less, and use more effective cognitive learning strategies (Brown *et al.*,

1999; Frost *et al.*, 1990; Mills and Blankstein, 2000), all of which can be expected to result in going beyond one's job description to perform behaviours that maintain and enhance the social and psychological context of work.

These findings also extend existing knowledge of self-efficacy, by showing that in addition to its well-known association with task performance (see Stajkovic and Luthans' meta-analysis, 1998), it also predicts OCB – if only for men. As stated earlier in this paper, men are apt to be stereotyped as competent, independent, and achievement-oriented (Langford & MacKinnon, 2000). Men who have internalized these expectations for their behaviour and who act to fulfil them will in all probability be those rating themselves high in generalized self-efficacy, which involves agreeing with statements such as, “I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself” and “I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks”. That these men are the ones engaging in more OCB is therefore not surprising, because doing so enables them to reap the career-related rewards identified by Allen (2006) and Heilman and Chen (2005) and thereby fulfil gender role expectations for competence and achievement-orientation.

For women, who are expected to engage in more communal behaviours (Diefendorff *et al.*, 2002) and who often internalize these expectations to the point where the task-related job role is defined more broadly to incorporate OCB (Morrison, 1994), self-efficacy was irrelevant. Women's performance of organizational citizenship behaviour was not predicated by the degree to which they deemed themselves capable of achieving their goals, but more probably by social norms reflecting different expectations of men and women in their performance of extra-role behaviours. To the extent that these norms dictate both performance and performance ratings, women may be at a disadvantage. If organizational citizenship behaviours are seen as required from women and not

men, women's performance of organizational citizenship behaviour will not be reflected in their performance ratings, whereas men's will (Allen, 2006; Heilman and Chen, 2005).

The failure of maladaptive perfectionism to predict OCB comes as something of a surprise. Given that this form of perfectionism has been associated with a host of dysfunctional work habits and attitudes, such as procrastination, task aversiveness, and anxiety (Brown *et al.*, 1999; Frost *et al.*, 1990), it is reasonable to conclude that individuals high in maladaptive perfectionism would have reported less participation in organizational citizenship behaviour. The fact that they did not may be attributable to a phenomenon identified by Brown *et al.* (1999), in which maladaptive perfectionism in university students was associated with more frequent study behaviour and higher anxiety, but was unrelated to academic achievement. In that situation, it would seem that the beneficial habit of frequent studying was cancelled out by the greater anxiety and perceptions of course difficulty, leaving academic performance unaffected overall by maladaptive perfectionism. A similar effect may have taken place among the respondents of the present study scoring high in maladaptive perfectionism, and rendered its effect on OCB null and void. One might also speculate that the dysfunctional work habits associated with maladaptive perfectionism do not wield as strong a negative effect on behaviour at work as they do on academic performance. Alternatively, the tendency toward critical self-evaluation attributed to maladaptive perfectionists may have been overstated in previous research, or simply may not hold true among a sample of working adults as opposed to university students.

### *Practical Implications*

The findings of this study yield several implications for human resource management, particularly in the areas of employee training and development. While managers may be put off by the term 'perfectionism', which carries with it connotations of obsessive-compulsive individuals

unable to finish a project due to fear of failure, this study's results suggest that encouraging employees to set high standards for their performance while taking setbacks in their stride may yield dividends in terms of OCB. As yet, there has been no widespread effort in either the workplace or the mental health context to boost adaptive perfectionism through training initiatives. Theory holds that adaptive perfectionism is developed in childhood when parents adhere to, but are flexible about, high standards for performance in a variety of contexts (Hamachek, 1978). Empirical results confirm that adults high in adaptive perfectionism are more likely to have had 'perfectionistic parenting' during their first sixteen years of life, i.e., parents who communicated high expectations for success in a variety of areas, without harsh reprisals for failure (Enns *et al.*, 2002). It is debatable to what extent HRM practices can simulate the impact of early developmental experiences. However, managers who convey high performance expectations to subordinates and encourage them to set challenging goals for themselves, without penalizing them unduly for failing to achieve such lofty expectations, may go some way toward instilling in subordinates an increased tendency to adaptive perfectionistic behaviour and cognitions.

Investing in general self-efficacy training for male employees is a complementary course of action that may yield benefits. One method to boost self-efficacy is that of the self-fulfilling prophecy, in which managers convey to subordinates the belief that they are capable of successful performance and likely to excel; subordinates, in turn, become more likely to believe they will excel, and go on to achieve higher levels of performance (Eden, 1992). Efforts to train managers to exhibit this Pygmalion leadership style have not, however, yielded consistently positive results (Eden *et al.*, 2000). An alternative approach takes the form of providing employees with opportunities to achieve success, in order to reinforce their self-concept as a capable worker (providing 'mastery experience'), using verbal persuasion to enhance workers' sense of capability, and enabling

vicarious experience through the observation of referent others performing successfully (see Bandura, 1997), and may be a more effective tactic (Eden and Aviram, 1993). Individuals who feel competent in their ability to perform successfully in the workplace are apt to have higher levels of self-confidence and engage in a greater number of extra-role behaviours.

#### *Limitations and Future Research*

Several limitations to the present study should be noted. The cross-sectional design of the study does not allow for firm conclusions regarding causality. It is possible that performance of organizational citizenship behaviour enhances self-efficacy, for instance. Future research employing a longitudinal design would be better placed to assess issues of directionality.

With regard to construct measurement, the reliance on self-report data poses some problems. Although research on self-reported performance suggests that it is comparable to ratings from other sources (Fecteau and Craig, 2001), and that self-report data are a useful means of measuring employees' perceptions (Spector, 1994), it may have been preferable to obtain independent ratings of OCB rather than rely on the respondents' estimation of their own behaviours. The use of multi-source data would also be better placed to avoid the potential for common method bias associated with the use of a single data source.

In terms of variance explained, the study involved a relatively small number of variables in its analysis. Controlling for more known predictors of OCB, such as job satisfaction, would have increased the explained variance and also enabled a more rigorous test of the extent to which perfectionism and self-efficacy are useful predictors beyond the effects of more traditional antecedents of OCB. The interaction effects explained only 3% of additional variance in the dependent variable; a larger sample size may have produced better results, and would also help to

ensure greater accuracy and generalizability of results in future, as would a higher response rate than that obtained by the present study.

Future research may wish to further explore the question of gender differences in performance of organizational citizenship behaviour, and investigate why men who perceive low levels of self-efficacy are also liable to rate themselves as less likely to engage in OCB. This would require measuring explicitly men's and women's expectations for their performance of OCB as well as their perceptions of others' expectations. It is also worth considering that gender may have the potential to moderate the impact of other antecedents to organizational citizenship behaviour, such as POS or justice. Given the disparity in expectations for men and women to perform OCB, further work is necessary to better understand this issue and to bring it to the attention of both managers and employees.



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TABLE 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations among Personality and Performance Variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1) OCB	5.53	0.66	-									
2) Gender	n/a	n/a	.09	-								
3) Organization	n/a	n/a	.26***	-.05	-							
4) Tenure	7.96	7.49	-.02	-.10	.03	-						
5) POS	3.89	1.26	.09	.03	-.32***	-.04	-					
6) Procedural justice	4.01	1.17	.18**	.12	-.07	-.07	.57***	-				
7) Distributive justice	3.51	1.54	-.05	.11	-.38***	.09	.40***	.42***	-			
8) Interactional justice	4.78	1.08	.10	.08	.03	-.08	.41***	.50***	.23***	-		
9) Self-efficacy	5.51	0.87	.32***	-.01	.02	-.11	.09	.13	.02	.18**	-	
10) Adaptive perfectionism	5.74	0.81	.44***	-.05	.15*	-.02	.07	.07	-.09	.12	.28***	-
11) Maladaptive perfectionism	3.46	1.32	-.01	.12	.16*	.10	-.16*	-.12	-.12	-.04	-.34***	.10

*Note.*  $N = 223$ .

\*  $p < .05$ .

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

TABLE 2

*Hierarchical regression results predicting Organizational Citizenship Behaviour*

Independent variable	<i>OCB</i>		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Gender	.13*	.14*	.15*
Organization	.23**	.19**	.18*
Tenure	.00	.03	.04
POS	.15*	.09	.11
Procedural justice	.16*	.12	.08
Distributive justice	-.05	.00	.00
Interactional justice	.00	-.05	-.03
Self-efficacy		.18**	.21**
Adaptive perfectionism		.35***	.32***
Maladaptive perfectionism		-.05	-.06
Gender x Self-efficacy			-.14*
Gender x Adaptive perfectionism			.10
Gender x Maladaptive perfectionism			.04

F	4.73***	9.19***	7.77***
$\Delta F$	4.73***	17.93***	2.04*
$\Delta R^2$	.16***	.18***	.03*
Adjusted $R^2$	.12***	.30***	.31***

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*Note.*  $N = 223$ .

\*  $p < .05$ .

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

TABLE 3

*Test of Simple Slopes of Regression for Interaction between Sex and Self-efficacy in Predicting  
Organizational citizenship behaviour*

Gender	Simple Slope	SE	<i>t</i> (221)
Male	.17	.06	3.12**
Female	-.07	.11	-0.61

*Note.* *N* = 223.

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

FIGURE 1

